

Swiss Confederation

# National Strategy on Addiction and Action Plan 2017–2024

## Extended to 2028



Gesundheit	Santé
Sanità	Sanadad

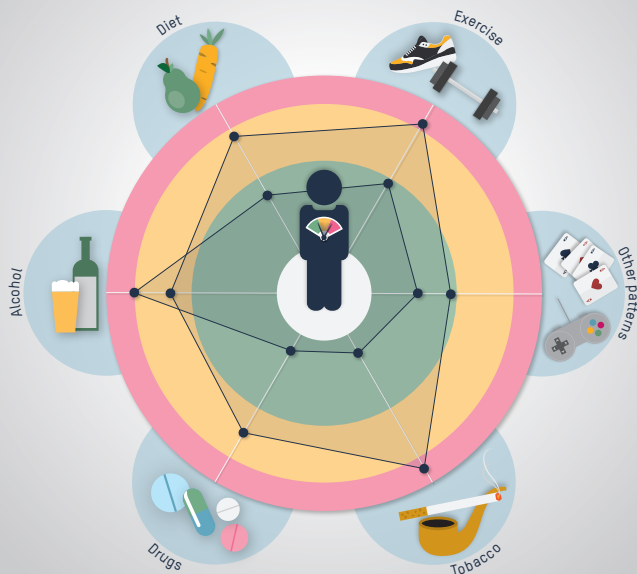
# 2020

# Addiction – societal and individual responsibility

Addiction and risk behaviour are societal phenomena. They are defined by each individual's behaviour, their ability to shape their own world and by societal framework conditions.

Addictive disorders are a huge burden for those affected and their environment, and are associated with high costs to society. Excessive use of psychoactive substances is also frequently linked to accidents or violence.

Effective addiction assistance requires the interaction of diverse stakeholders from health and social services, education, justice, the police and the business community. At the same time, however, individuals are called on to take responsibility for their own health and behaviour.



1.

## Strengthening health literacy

We all have our individual patterns of behaviour and consumption. Behaviours are not static but change according to one's age and stage in life. The behavioural balance of each individual thus also changes in the course of a lifetime.

Individuals and their environment, circumstances and ability to shape the world they live in are key to dealing with addiction. Strengthening individual health literacy is therefore an important part of addiction prevention and addiction assistance.

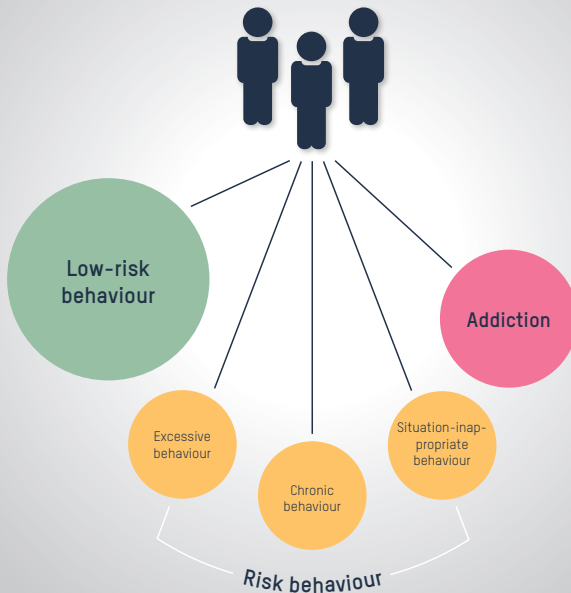


2.

## Creating favourable conditions

Besides individual circumstances, societal realities such as work, environmental and living conditions, availability of substances and access to potentially addictive offerings play a crucial role in the development of addiction.

Societal framework must therefore be structured in such a way that the health of the individual is promoted and the objectives of addiction prevention and addiction assistance are supported. That includes preventing the onset of problematic consumption and providing early support to vulnerable individuals as well as assistance with controlled use or withdrawal.



## 3.

## Differentiating risks

The National Strategy on Addiction differentiates consumption and behaviour patterns according to their intensity and associated risks for the individual and for society.

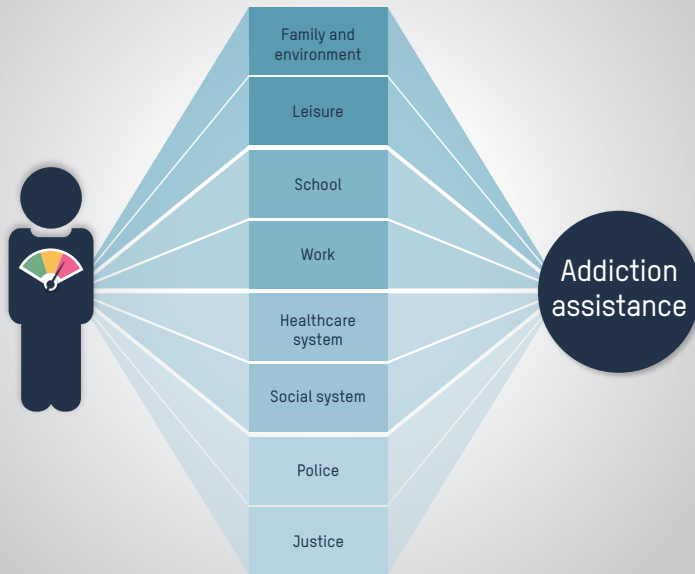
- **Low-risk behaviour** describes the use of psychoactive substances and types of behaviour which are not harmful for the individuals concerned or their environment and are often part of social coexistence.
- **Risk behaviour** involves consumption or behaviour that can cause harm to individuals and their environment. We differentiate between three behaviour patterns with different harm potential, namely excessive behaviour, chronic behaviour and situation-inappropriate behaviour.
- **Addiction** is an illness that is characterised by compulsive behaviour that persists even in the face of serious health and social consequences for the individual concerned and their environment.



4.

## Assessment of consumption and behaviour

- Most people have a low-risk consumption and behaviour pattern and do not constitute a risk to either themselves or others.
- Some people are no longer able to control their substance use or their behaviour, however. They show a risk behaviour that can develop into addiction.
- People who are unable to restrict their consumption or change their behaviour should nonetheless be given support to minimise risk and harm.



## 5.

## Early support

- People with problematic behaviour and consumption patterns often do not recognise the issue themselves, or only recognise it at a late stage. The earlier risk behaviour or addiction is recognised, the more effectively those concerned can be supported and harm to individuals and society reduced.
- Effective addiction assistance starts with the individual and provides support regardless of whether the person is in a position to undergo treatment or not.
- Effective addiction assistance aims to regenerate health and promote social integration, involving family and friends as well as other social contacts through leisure activities, work and school.

# National Strategy on Addiction – objectives and measures

The National Strategy on Addiction contains objectives and coordinates measures for risk behaviour and addiction as part of the “Health2020” health policy agenda.

Together with the National Strategy for the Prevention of Non-communicable Diseases (NCD Strategy), the National Strategy on Addiction replaces the previous National Alcohol and Tobacco Programmes as well as the Package of Drug-Related Measures.

The National Strategy on Addiction builds on proven solutions while at the same time promoting innovative approaches in treatment, harm reduction and prevention. It creates the basis for an effective response to new forms of addiction.

The National Strategy on Addiction was developed with the involvement of addiction policy partners and serves as a guideline for implementing addiction-specific activities and projects on the part of all stakeholders.

Quality of life

Contemporary  
care services

Completion of  
health protection

Health promotion  
and disease prevention

- Improve integrated care
- Adapt services in long-term care
- Improved care research and clinical research, introduction of registers

- Avoid unnecessary medical radiation, introducing supplementary monitoring
- Monitor and control of antibiotic resistances
- Reduce avoidable infections in care facilities

- Improve prevention and early detection of non-communicable diseases
- Promote mental health and improve prevention and early detection of mental diseases
- **Improve prevention, early detection and control of addictive disorders**

National Strategy  
on Addiction

Action areas

Objectives

Measures

A.

## Improving prevention and addiction assistance

As part of the Health2020 health policy agenda, the Federal Council has decided to intensify health promotion and disease prevention. With regard to addiction, the agenda calls for improvements in prevention, early detection and control of addictive disorders.

The Federal Council has commissioned the Federal Office of Public Health to develop a National Strategy on Addiction. The focus of the strategy is from both a broad-based policy-oriented and specialist point of view.

## Focus on the individual's well-being

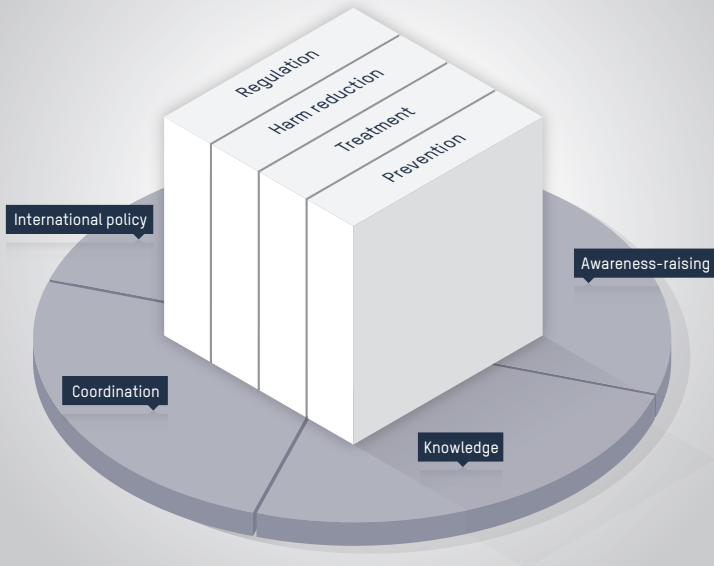
The National Strategy on Addiction has four overriding objectives:

- Prevent addictive disorders
- Provide addicted individuals with the necessary help and treatment
- Mitigate damage to health and social harm
- Reduce negative impacts on society

The National Strategy on Addiction

- builds on the experience of the four-pillar policy. It ensures the continuity of existing services for addiction prevention, harm reduction and treatment but also strives to further develop addiction assistance in order to create synergies and close gaps;
- focuses on both existing and new substances and behaviours that have the potential to cause dependency;
- focuses on the well-being and health of individuals; it reinforces personal responsibility by encouraging individual health literacy;
- supports health-promoting conditions and is committed to ensuring that those affected receive effective treatment.

The National Strategy on Addiction provides an overarching framework for orientation and action regarding addiction issues which enables the Confederation, the cantons and additional stakeholders to develop solutions as partners and implement them in a coordinated manner.



## C.

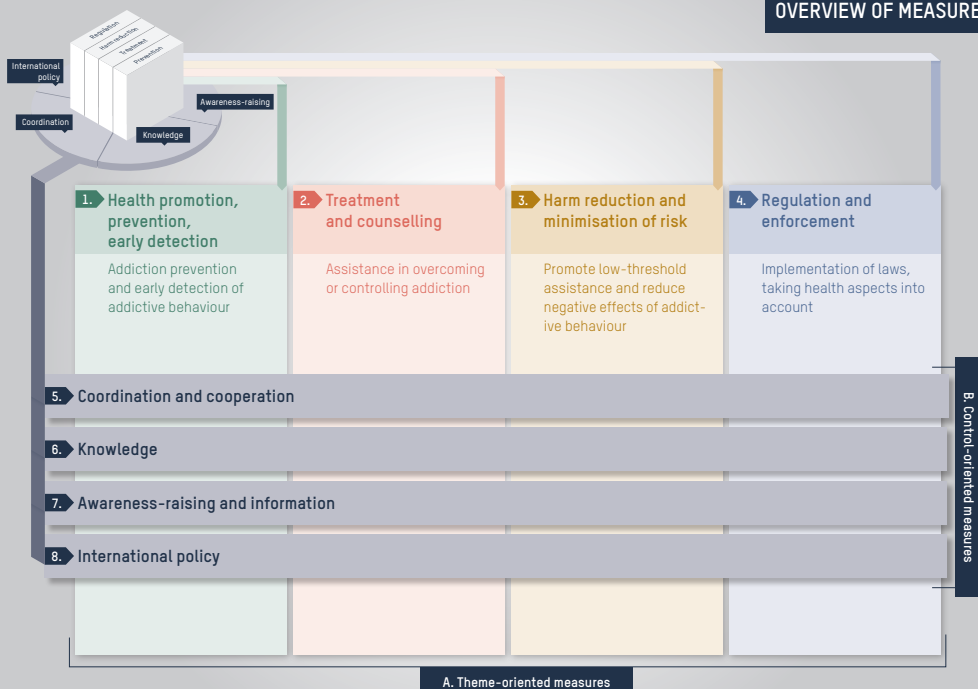
## Targeted action

The National Strategy on Addiction has eight fields of action. Four theme-oriented fields address the lines of action of the established four-pillar policy:

- Prevention, health promotion, early detection
- Treatment and counselling
- Harm reduction and minimisation of risk
- Regulation and enforcement

Four additional fields of action describe cross-sectoral tasks:

- Coordination and cooperation
- Knowledge
- Awareness-raising and information
- International policy



## D.

## Coordinated implementation

The National Strategy on Addiction defines the objectives for the period from 2017 until 2028.

The action plan determines implementation priorities and describes how objectives are to be achieved. It also provides information on the manner of cooperation between the Confederation and cantons, communes, professional associations, NGOs and additional partners.

Measures are embedded as far as possible within existing structures and are implemented according to the responsibilities of the various addiction policy stakeholders.

As part of an evaluation, the effectiveness of the measures has been reviewed by the end of 2020 and 2024 and the measures had been adapted.

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Federal Office of Public Health FOPH

P.O. Box

CH-3003 Bern

sucht-addiction@bag.admin.ch

[www.bag.admin.ch/sucht](http://www.bag.admin.ch/sucht)

**Supplementary documents:**

- National Strategy on Addiction 2017–2024
- Indicator set for the National Strategy on Addiction
- Action plan for the National Strategy on Addiction
- Federal Council Strategy “Health2020”
- National Strategy for the Prevention of Non-communicable Diseases (NCD Strategy)
- Action plan for the National Strategy for the Prevention of Non-communicable Diseases (NCD Strategy)
- Report “Mental health in Switzerland”
- Report “The future of psychiatry in Switzerland”

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